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THE
ECONOMY OF AN INSTITUTION,

ESTABLISHED IN

SPITALFIELDS, LONDON,

[App. Musc.]

FOR THE PURPOSE OF SUPPLYING

THE POOR

WITH A

GOOD MEAT SOUP,

At One Penny per Quart.

Principally extracted from the Papers of the Society, and published

with a view to the Establishment of

SIMILAR INSTITUTIONS,

IN TOWNS, VILLAGES, AND POPULOUS NEIGHBOURHOODS.

London: Printed by W. Phillips, George Yard, Lombard Street;

1799.

PRICE 3d. or 2s. 6d. per Doz. to give away.

THE
ECONOMY OF AN INSTITUTION, &c.

IT is doubtless obvious to every reflecting mind, that at no period have more urgent causes conspired to render the efforts of the affluent, and of those desirous of mitigating the sufferings of the poor, so desirable or necessary, as during the present winter, as some of the articles of food will, in all probability, exceed former example as to price. The failure in the late harvest, has caused a scarcity of grain that is greatly felt, and from this cause, the price of the important article of bread, upon which perhaps the poor depend more for their daily support, than any other, has so greatly advanced, that the small earnings of very many families are wholly expended in the purchase of it alone; and present appearances induce the belief, that butchers' meat, though at present it be at a moderate price, will, in the course of the winter, be very considerably higher. If the affluent, and those in easy circumstances, feel the inconveniencies resulting from this, how far more intimately must they be felt by the poor, whose pittance, even in times of plenty, may be scarcely sufficient to extricate them from the miseries of want. Surely under circumstances like the present, the sufferings they endure loudly call for the attention and comforts, which a small portion of the time and money of those in more elevated stations in life, might easily bestow; and when scarcity prevails, it is a duty owed to the community as well as to the poor. The attempt

to raise our fellow-creatures from a state of want, and to secure to them the enjoyment of all the conveniencies and comforts which their station will admit, are exertions worthy of a liberal mind.

The sympathy that has at various times been felt for the distresses of the poor, has excited benevolent individuals and societies to use considerable exertions to alleviate their sufferings. Sometimes pecuniary relief has been afforded; at other times the articles of fuel, of clothing, or of food, have been distributed. It is however evident, that to give due effect to these purposes, in populous neighbourhoods and in manufacturing towns, a large and constantly supplied fund is indispensable. At other times, the necessary articles of subsistence have been purchased in large quantities, on the best terms, and have been retailed to the poor under prime cost. By this means their resources have been essentially assisted, the requisite funds have been raised without trespassing greatly on the benevolence of individuals; and, by their not relying too much on the bounty of others, that independent spirit which is to be found in the walks of humble life, has been preserved.

These considerations excited a number of persons in the winter of 1797, to form themselves into a society, for the purpose of endeavouring to alleviate a part of the difficulties under which the poor then laboured. In some of the schemes above alluded to, the provisions remained to be cooked by the poor, and in others, the articles of clothing or of fuel, though it cannot be doubted but in many instances they were properly applied, yet when distributed gratis, opportunities were afforded for their being exchanged for pernicious spirituous liquors, or conveyed to the pawnbroker's shop. These are evils, to which the untaught and impro-

vident poor have long been accustomed; the existence of them must ever be deplored by the benevolent, who in their endeavours to mitigate the sufferings of the poor, ought most studiously to avoid affording them any opportunity of increasing their miseries by such means. It is to be feared that these on the one hand, and their want of economy on the other, have too often rendered the well-intended efforts of individuals and societies less productive of benefit than was expected, if not unavailing.

To obviate these inconveniencies, no other remedy occurred to this Society, than the distribution of the articles ready dressed; and it appeared to it to be a fact, universally admitted, that an equal quantity of nutritious aliment cannot be afforded at so reasonable an expense, by any other mode of preparation, as by that of a Good Meat Soup.

The Society was also induced to prefer Soup, with a hope that the poor would become attached to that species of food, and thence be led to adopt a mode of cooking more simple and economical than any they had hitherto practised; and that, by thus preparing a palatable and nutritious food, to be sold at a low price to such as were properly recommended, many who are laudably anxious to provide for their families by their own industry, and to avoid the painful necessity of applying for parochial relief, might be materially assisted.

The plan upon which the Society was established, was somewhat similar to one at Birmingham, and was instituted in Spitalfields, which appeared the most eligible situation, being the residence of a very large number of families employed in manufactories; but its benefits are not confined to the inhabitants of any particular district. The beneficial effects of this, and the eagerness with

which the poor sought a relief, at once economical and nourishing, induced the establishment of other Institutions of the same kind, soon after, in other parts of London; these are conducted in a manner nearly similar, but with modifications adapted to local circumstances. As a proof that the poor esteemed the Soup a seasonable relief, it may be quoted, that in the winter of 1797-8, in which the house in Spitalfields was open only 88 days, 114,502 quarts were sold; in the winter of 1798-9, in which it was open 125 days, 152,489 quarts were sold; and the Committee appointed to conduct the affairs of the Institution, felt much satisfaction in learning that the observations made at the close of the season, by many industrious but indigent families, who had frequently partaken of the Soup, were those of regret, mingled with gratitude and commendation.

The success and acknowledged utility of these Institutions demonstrates, that much may be done towards the relief of the poor. Not only to the large body of them in the vicinity of London, are the benefits which they hold out properly directed, but they are adapted to every village and manufacturing town; and many have been established in various parts of England. It affords some consolation to those who are acquainted with their nature, and have the benefit of the poor at heart, that the establishment of them is fast gaining ground; indeed the great number of applications that have recently been made for details of the plans of those already formed in London, and a conviction of the utility and benefit resulting to the poor from them, have induced the present publication, as well as a hope that an account of what has already been done, may stimulate others, and tend to convince benevolent

and well disposed individuals residing in poor and populous neighbourhoods, that it will not be a difficult task to establish similar institutions, and that, wherever they are established they become a source of comfort to the poor, and afford material aid to their daily sustenance. The distress arising from the want of the necessaries of life, has too often contributed to the commission of crimes; which, equally with those proceeding from depravity, have entailed lasting disgrace upon the unfortunate perpetrators and their families. Were the united efforts of the humane and affluent more frequently directed to meliorate the condition of the poor, many of the evils they now endure might probably be removed, and in seasons like the present, by raising their fellow-creatures above a state of want, their country essentially benefited.

Institutions of a similar nature have been attempted by parishes or corporate towns, but these have too often failed of success. From the well-directed benevolence and zeal of individuals only in the cause of the poor, can institutions for their permanent comfort receive due support; who, not alone biassed by the more trifling desire of reducing the poor rates, determinately resolve to benefit the poor.

If a desire should arise in the breast of any individual under whose consideration this may fall, to assist the poor in his vicinity, by the benefits which such an Institution holds forth, let not the apparent magnitude of the undertaking deter such an one; a little calm consideration and conference, assisted by an account of the mode in which such an Institution is conducted, will suffice to prove that it will not be a difficult task; let him therefore call together a few well-disposed-neighbours, whose ready disposition to serve the poor cannot be

doubted, and may not such be found in every town and village, and consult with them upon the propriety of assisting the poor under their present pressure.

For the more complete information of such as may be thus desirous of rendering service to the public and the poor, and surely whatever tends, in seasons like the present, to make a little food go a great way, to save the consumption of bread, and in fact to economize the necessary articles of food, may be considered a service to the public, the minutæ of the economy of the Institution in Spitalfields will be detailed, which it is hoped will convey the necessary information, in forming new establishments. It may perhaps be objected that the modes of transacting the affairs of one which is capable of, and has frequently prepared and sold, upwards of 2100 quarts of Soup per day, are not applicable to the situation of a small town or village; but the necessary alterations and modifications of the plan will become apparent without difficulty, and it is far more easy to rescind than to chalk out a new mode. Copies of the Receipt by which the Soup is made, and of the mode adopted in preparing it, of the Recommendation given by subscribers to the poor, of the Ticket given by the Society in lieu of the Recommendation, and of the Bye-Laws of the Committee, will be added to the above, as well as a Plan of the premises on which the Soup is made and sold: the addition of the latter was suggested by the idea that it might be of some assistance in laying out the premises of establishments, where there may be a considerable number of applicants, as indeed it has already been. The unpleasant effects resulting to the poor from the pressure of a croud at the door of the house, induced the Committee to adopt the plan of arrang-

ing them in the house, in the order of application: by this means, they have been relieved from the difficulties of a croud, the Soup has been supplied in turn, and the whole have been protected from the inclemencies of the weather.

AT the commencement of the Institution, a few individuals intending actively to assist in the execution of the plan, met frequently at private houses, and circulated a printed address to the public, together with sundry Resolutions for their future government, and of that of a Committee, which was soon appointed to carry its plans into effect. It now consists of about 36 acting members, and 3 or 4 supernumerary. It is however permitted to increase its number to 48. A general meeting of Subscribers, who are about 600 in number, many of whom attend, is held once in 2 or 3 months during the season for making the Soup, as well as before the commencement, and at the end of it. The Committee meets once in two weeks, in an evening, at the Soup House, No. 53, Brick Lane, Spitalfields, and is generally attended by about twenty of its members, when the Treasurer reports the monies received for Soup, and the balance of the Society's fund. Bills presented for payment are referred to a Sub-Committee, who examine them, and if found right, order payment; new members are proposed and balloted for, &c. &c. Great advantage has been derived from dividing the business among small sub-Committees, and requiring them to report regularly.

Four iron boilers have been erected on the premises, capable of making upwards of 2100 quarts of Soup. It is made according to the annexed Receipt, a copy of which is hung up in the Boiling house for reference; its average price, ~~exclusive~~^{exclusive} of

rent, wages, boilers, and improvements on the premises, is rather more than $1\frac{3}{4}$ d. per quart. The following assistants have been found necessary; a woman, as superintendent, who lives in the house, rent free; her office is to attend the cooking, to measure out the Soup, and to see that cleanliness be observed. There are also three men hired by the week, who, under the direction and inspection of Sub-Committees prepare the meat and ingredients for making the Soup, attend the process, and scour and keep clean the boilers, utensils, and premises, which is considered by the Committee an object of great importance.

Three members of the Committee are appointed in turn as *daily visitors*; at least two of them attend at 6 o'Clock in the evening, to see the meat sent in during the day, weighed, and afterwards apportioned, cut up, and put into the boilers, and the remainder hung up in the larder; the fires are then lighted, and the peas and other ingredients are weighed out, and afterwards locked up in the store room; the key of which, together with that of the larder, are given to the superintendent. Before 11 o'Clock on the following morning, the same three visitors attend, for the purpose of delivering the Soup to the Poor: one of them is employed in giving out numerical Tickets to those who bring Recommendations signed by Subscribers. Another visitor is occupied in receiving the money, and reporting the number of each Ticket, and the number of Quarts to the third visitor, who registers them in a numerical book, by which it is intended to prevent the application of the same persons more than once on the same day. Thus by the regularity and dispatch used in serving the Soup, the former of which will be more fully exemplified by the ground plan of the premises annexed, 2100 quarts

of Soup have frequently been delivered in less than two hours and a half.

It is the duty of the visitors, before they leave the premises, to observe that the cash taken agree with the number of quarts sold, and to enter it in the visitor's book, with any remarks worthy notice that may occur. Lastly, they report to the Treasurer, and deliver him a Ticket of the amount of the money received. Upon each Recommendation is put the number of the Ticket given for it; they are regularly filed, and afterwards strung up in hundreds for easy reference.

The Ticket given in lieu of the Subscriber's Recommendation, intitles the possessor to apply every day, and lasts about two months, at the option of the Committee; the Subscriber then gives a new Recommendation if he think proper. The quantity allowed is proportioned to the number in family. If a family consist of two or three persons two quarts are deemed reasonable; if of four or five persons, three quarts, and so in proportion.

The *visitor's book* above alluded to, is a printed form with blanks, to be filled up by the evening and morning visitors, and contains for the information of the Committee, and regularity in its proceedings, an account of the names of the members who attend; of the quantity of meat brought in during the day, and whether it agree with the butcher's bill; of the manner in which the meat was apportioned, and the quantity left; of the quantity of Soup made and sold; of the number of Recommendations received daily; and miscellaneous observations: a Sub-Committee is appointed to examine this, which reports any remarks that appear of consequence to the next sitting of the Committee.

BYE-LAWS OF THE COMMITTEE.

- I. That this Committee do meet once in two weeks, subject, nevertheless, to the call of the Secretary, upon the requisition of six of its members.
- II. That this Committee do meet at 6 o'Clock in the evening, the time to be determined by the middle watch of three, and that every member be liable to a fine of 1s. who shall not come into the Committee room before the reading of the list of members be concluded, without an excuse deemed reasonable by a majority of the members present.
- III. That not less than 13 members shall constitute a quorum for transacting business.
- IV. That the Treasurer be appointed Chairman of this Committee, and that it be the duty of the Chairman to read the fair minutes, to keep order, and to put such questions as may come before the Committee, during its sittings.
- V. That if the Chairman be not in the Committee room before the reading of the list members be concluded, the members present shall be at liberty to choose a Chairman from among themselves.
- VI. That in consequence of the power vested in this Committee, by a general meeting of the Society, of electing its own members, such elections be determined by ballot, not less than six negatives to exclude.
- VII. That no member of the Committee shall absent himself during its sitting without permission from the chair.

VIII. That the order of business in the Committee after reading over the list, and balloting for new members be first to receive the report of the Sub-Committee, appointed to examine the visitor's book. 2dly, To read the minutes of the last sitting, after which new propositions shall be taken into consideration.

IX. That the daily visitors, or their substitutes, procured from among the members of this Committee, appointed to assist at the preparation of the Soup, attend at 6 o'Clock in the evening precisely for that purpose, under the fine of 1s. for absence at the precise hour, and of 2s. 6d. for total absence, with this proviso, and that two of them shall be at liberty, by previous agreement, to excuse one, who shall not be liable to the said fines.

X. That if it should be inconvenient for any member to attend in his turn at the delivery of the Soup, he must procure a substitute from among the members of this Committee; in default of which, and in case of non-attendance of a member precisely at the hour appointed, he shall pay a fine of 5s. the regular attendance of the Sub-Committees appointed to assist at the delivery of the Soup, being considered by this Committee, essential to the proper support of the Institution.

XI. That all monies received by the Treasurer for fines, be appropriated to the use of the Society, in defraying the expenses attending its meetings, and to such other purposes as may appear eligible to this Committee.

XIII. That the evening and morning visitors do severally note in the visitor's book the exact time of their coming.

RECEIPT OF INGREDIENTS

From which One Hundred Galls. of Soup are made.

8 Stone of Beef <i>or 64 lb</i>	24 lbs. of Onions
16 Ditto Shins	8 lbs. of Salt
46 lbs. of Pease	10 oz. of Black Pepper
36 lbs. of Scotch Barley	

The boiler in which the Soup is to be made, is nearly filled with water, before the other ingredients are put in, and is filled up with boiling water in the morning, to make up for evaporation during the night; during the whole of which the Soup continues simmering: the fire being damped in the evening, and heaped up with a mixture of small coal, ashes, and water, which prevents its going out in the night.

RECOMMENDATION.

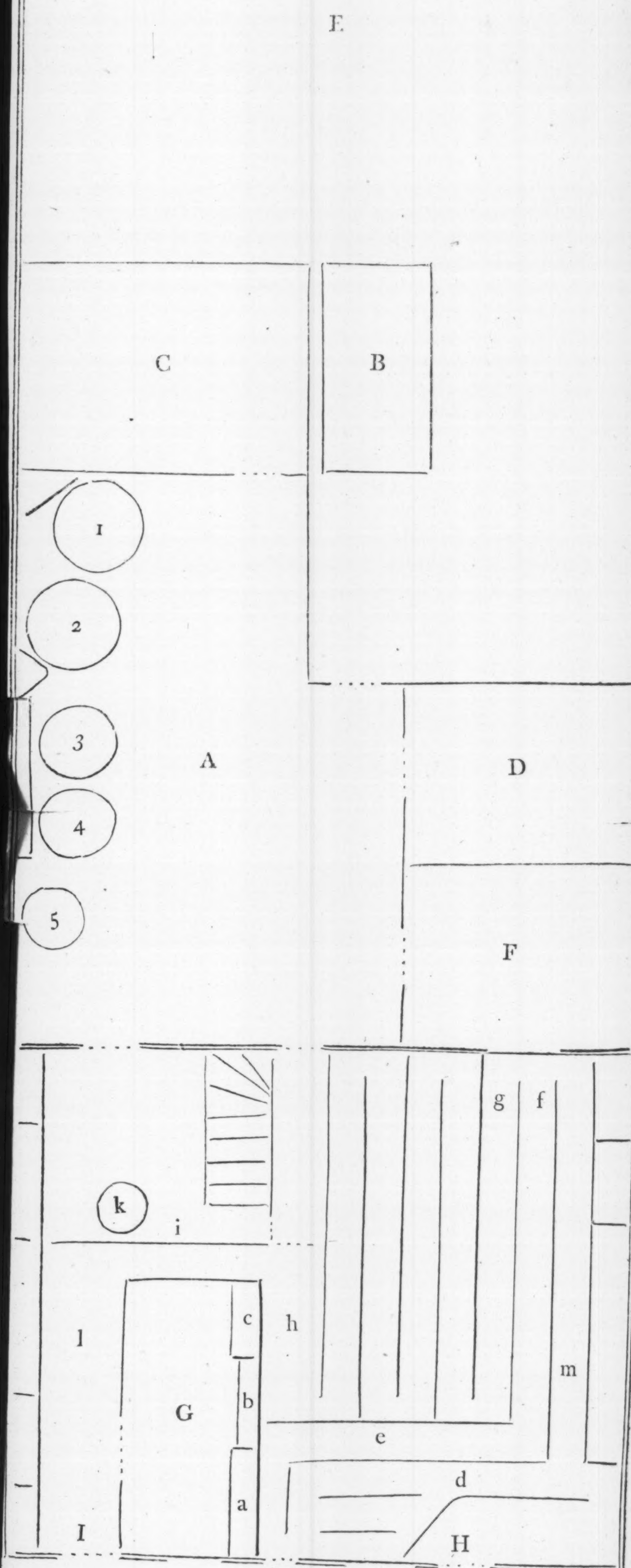
I recommend

living at
and having in family, to receive Quarts of
Good Meat Soup, on paying One Penny per Quart.

London, 179

To the Visitors at the Soup-House,
No. 53, Brick-Lane, Spitalfields.

☞ This Recommendation must be presented at the Soup-House, between the Hours of Eleven and One.



GROUND PLAN of the SOUP-HOUSE, in SPITALFIELDS,
on the Scale of 1-8th of an Inch to a Foot.

mp®

TICKET.*

No.  Quarts

for 

Recommended by

 This Ticket is not to be disposed of.

Bad Halfpence will be refused.

Apply at No. 53, Brick Lane, Spitalfields, between the Hours of Eleven and One on the Working Days of the Week.

DESCRIPTION of the GROUND PLAN
of the SOUP-HOUSE.

THE Soup is prepared in the room A ; the boilers (two of one hundred and fifty gallons, and two of one hundred gallons), are numbered 1, 2, 3, and 4 ; No. 5 is a digester, which has not yet been used as one, the Committee being of opinion that most of the nutriment may be extracted from the bones by the usual mode of preparing the Soup. It has sometimes happened that a considerable quantity of Soup has been left after all the applicants have been served ; and the Committee has found considerable utility in putting it into tin vessels about six inches deep, and letting those vessels stand in a back (B), partly filled with water ; by this means the Soup has been very soon cooled, and has been kept perfectly good till next day, which if it be left in the boilers, or in vessels in considerable quantities, will not be the case when Soup is so much boiled as quite to reduce the meat. Above the cooler a back, sufficient to contain a supply of water for the consumption of two days, is about

* N. B. This is printed on strong Cartridge Paper.

to be placed. (C) is a yard, into which the bones, offal, &c. are put. The bones are sold to a person who regularly fetches them away. (D) is the larder, with a lattice window looking towards the yard (E). (F) is the store-room, in which the peas, onions, &c. are kept. (G) is a small inclosure in the house, in which the visitors are stationed in the morning, at the delivery of the Soup: one at the table (a), to give tickets for the recommendations brought by the applicants; another at the till (b) who takes the money; the third at the desk (c) who registers the number of the ticket, and the quantity of Soup sold, in a numerical book. The applicants go in at the door (H), and, if they bring recommendations, pass along the passage (d) to the visitor at (a) and having exchanged their recommendations for tickets, pass along by (e) to (f), and turning the corner to (g) proceed along the maze to the visitor at the till (b), where each pays his money, and receives a little ticket denoting the number of quarts paid for: with this he passes along by (h) to the superintendent at (i), who is stationed with a vessel (k) which is constantly supplied with Soup from the boiling house; having shewn his little ticket, he leaves it in a box, and having received his Soup, he passes along the passage (l), and goes away through the door (I).

If the applicant has a *ticket*, having entered at the door (H), he passes by (m) and joins those coming from the recommendation table at (g).

